

ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT

of the

MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year

1948.

-----ooOoo-----

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICIALS:

District Medical Officer of Health (and Divisional Medical
Officer for North Herts Area):

VICTOR R. WALKER, M.B., Ch.B., B.Sc., D.P.H.
(since September, 1948)

Divisional Health Office: 12 Brand Street,
Hitchin.
(Telephone: Hitchin 107)

Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor:

S.M. JACKSON, M.S.I.A., C.R.S.I.,
Town Hall, Royston.
(Telephone: Royston 2393)

Council Offices,
Royston.

(Telephone: Royston 2393 and 2394)

J. SPENCER, D.P.A., A.C.C.S., Clerk to the Council.

ROYSTON URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

To the Chairman and Members of the Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In accordance with Ministry of Health Circular 3/49 I beg to submit my annual report for the year 1948, for the first eight months of which period my predecessor, Dr. N. Macfadyen, held office.

From the body of such report there is no particular point I would bring to your special notice and I would only acknowledge the great assistance received from Mr. S.M. Jackson, your surveyor and sanitary inspector, who is responsible for the sections on sanitary matters. I would also thank your council and its chief officers for every consideration and help since taking up duties.

I am, ladies and gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

VICTOR R. WALKER.

June, 1949.

SECTION A.

LOCAL STATISTICS

Area (in acres)	...	...	1,626
Population - Registrar-General's Estimate for mid-1948	...	...	4,373
Number of inhabited houses at 1st April, 1948 (estimated)	...	...	1,300
Rateable value (1st April, 1948)	...	...	£27,696
Sum represented by Penny Rate (est. 1948-49)	...	...	£106

Extracts from Vital Statistics for
the year 1948

Totals M. F.

LIVE BIRTHS	(Legitimate	65	41	24	} LIVE BIRTHRATE per 1,000 of the estimated resid- ent population ... <u>16.9</u> (England and Wales = 17.9)
	(Illegitimate	9	6	3	
	(All	74	47	27	
STILLBIRTHS	(Legitimate	1	1	-	} STILLBIRTHRATE per 1,000 total (live and still) births <u>13.3</u>
	(Illegitimate	-	-	-	
	(All	1	1	-	
DEATHS	...	48	25	23	DEATHRATE per 1,000 of the estimated resid- ent population ... <u>11.0</u> (England and Wales = 10.8)

Deathrate of Infants under one year of age:

All infants per 1,000 live births ... (England and Wales = 40
34)

(Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate births ... 15)
(Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate births ... 222)

Actual number of deaths under 1 year:

Legitimate	...	...	...	1
Illegitimate	...	...	...	2
Total	...	...	...	3

Deaths from Puerperal Causes (Puerperal Sepsis -
(Other puerperal Causes -

Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	...	...	11
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	-
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	-
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	-

Comment on vital statistics for the year

Estimated population shows a rise of 93 on the year. The live birthrate continues favourable though much below the record of 20.8 for 1947. At 11.0 the local deathrate is much below that for 1947 (15.4) and is favourable in view of a certain loading of older age groups in the local population. The infant mortality on analysis is shown to be marred by the deaths of 2 illegitimate children in the total of 9 such births.

SECTION B

General Provision of Health Services

With the inception of the National Health Service Act in July, 1948, the Herts County Council constituted a divisional area for North Herts with a divisional medical officer for the county health and school medical services, who was also appointed medical officer of health to the six constituent district councils, whose sanitary functions are unchanged.

Water Supply

The whole of the district, with the exception of 7 houses at Eagle Tavern, is supplied with water from the chalk by the Royston Water Company, by a piped supply of excellent quality.

There are 5 houses at The Green which are supplied by means of a standpipe. All the other houses in the district are supplied from the water mains direct to the houses.

No shortage was experienced during the year.

4 bacteriological examinations were made during the year.

A typical Analysis is as follows:-

Physical Examination

Appearance	Clear
Colour	Colourless
Odour	Odourless
Taste	Tasteless.

Chemical Analysis in p.p.m.

pH value	7.4
Free Carbon Dioxide as CO_2	17.9
Ammoniacal Nitrogen as N	0.006
Albuminoid Nitrogen as N	0.018
Nitrous Nitrogen as N	Nil
Nitric Nitrogen as N	4.3
Hardness (Clark)	
Temporary	195.2
Permanent	35.7
Oxygen consumed from KMnO_4 (4 hrs at 80°F.) as O	0.064
Alkalinity as CaCO_3	219.4
Total Solids (dried at 140°C)	290

Mineral Analysis in p.p.m.

Calcium as Ca	99.17
Magnesium as Mg	1.31
Sodium as Na	21.12
Carbonate as CO ₃	131.6
Chloride as Cl	10.0
Sulphate as SO ₄	11.93
Nitrate as NO ₃	19.05
Iron as Fe	0.1
Silica as SiO ₂	22.0

Bacteriological Examination

Bacteria/ml at 20°C. in 72 hrs on nutrient agar	3
Bacteria/ml at 20°C rapidly liquefying nutrient gelatine	2
Bacteria/ml at 37°C. in 48 hrs on nutrient agar	1
Coliform Organisms	absent from 100 ml.

Remarks

This hard, chalk water is in a satisfactory chemical, physical and bacteriological condition and is suitable for drinking purposes.

Sewerage and Drainage

Three new houses built by private enterprise and 34 new houses built by the Council were connected to the sewerage system during the year.

Refuse Removal and Disposal

In July the Council acquired a Shelvoke & Drewry Chelsea Type freighter of 11.3 cubic yards capacity with sliding metal covers and hydraulic tipping gear. This replaced the horse drawn refuse vehicle which had done service for 35 years.

During the first six months of the year refuse removal and salvage collection was done by hired horse and manual labour whilst during the second six months direct labour was employed with the new motor vehicle.

A comparison of costs between the two methods shows that a considerable saving results from the use of the motor vehicle and direct labour.

The cost of refuse removal for the first half of the year was £428.2s.9d. whilst for the second half the cost was £336.2s.6d.

The refuse tip at Coombes Hole was kept in as clean a condition as available labour allowed, but it was impossible to carry out all the requirements of the Ministry of Health in accordance with the Circular on Controlled Tipping. The greatest difficulty is experienced in finding suitable material for covering, which is not available in anything near sufficient quantity.

The accumulation of tins left at the end of the war still remains to be dealt with, and it is to be hoped that the work of dealing with this source of harbourage for rats can be carried out in the near future.

Rat infestation on the tip and also on the Sewage Farm was again kept down by regular baiting and poisoning carried out by the staff of the Herts. Agricultural Executive Committee under contract with the Urban Council.

SALVAGE

An increased amount of waste paper was again collected during the year, the total amounting to 32 tons 5 cwts. and realising £208.17.11. With the increased collection allowance made by the Board of Trade, the total revenue from salvage was £225.4.11.

The salvage was continued to be sorted, baled, bundled and stored at the Depot in Queens Road, where the accommodation is unsuitable and insufficient, but under the present difficult conditions for new building works, it was not considered possible to provide any other accommodation.

HOUSING

The Post War Housing Programme continued to progress during the year and 34 permanent brick houses on the Orchard Road Site were completed. 22 of these were of three bedroom type and 12 of four bedroom type.

One new dwelling was erected by private enterprise and also two Police Cottages. Conversions and adaptations of existing buildings also provided 8 family units of accommodation, 6 being provided by the Council and 2 by private enterprise.

HOUSING ACT 1936

Due to the great amount of time necessarily expended on new housing works and in other directions, it has been impossible to carry out much work in the re-conditioning and repair of old property, and no formal action under the Housing Act was taking during the year.

One house on which a Demolition Order was operative has been demolished. There remain 6 houses in Clearance Areas to be demolished.

Informal action was taken where essential repairs to roofs, walls, floors, windows, ceilings, eaves gutters and downpipes, etc., were necessary, with satisfactory results.

CONTROL OF CIVIL BUILDING

The Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor has been designated as the officer responsible for the issue of Building Licences on behalf of the Minister of Works under Defence Regulations 56A.

During 1948, 6 licences to erect new dwelling houses were issued.

One house under licence was completed and occupied by the end of the year.

Three licences were issued for the conversion of existing buildings into dwelling accommodation to provide 5 units of accommodation at an estimated cost of £2227.

The Council converted 2 premises into 6 units of accommodation at a cost of £2234.

121 other applications to carry out building works were received during the year, of which 9 were refused as being for work not considered essential at the present time.

112 licences were issued for essential works and repairs to properties of a total estimated cost of £9592.

Of these licences 80 were in respect of dwelling houses and 32 in respect of other buildings.

The works licensed included the repair or renewal of roofs, eaves gutters and downpipes, drains, external walls, internal wall plaster, ceilings, chimney stacks, floors, cooking and heating apparatus, water closets, sinks, baths and lavatory basins, the repair and painting of external wood and ironwork, internal redecorations, installation of electric services and other essential works to bring property up to a reasonable standard of repair.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Milk

There are three milk producers in the district, one of whom is licensed by the County Council for the production of Tuberculin Tested Milk.

Two of the producers are also retail purveyors of milk in the district. Two other retail purveyors obtain their milk from outside the district.

Inspections of the farms and dairies were made and samples of milk taken in accordance with the Milk (Special Designations) Regulations 1936/46 gave results which complied with the standard.

Meat.

No slaughtering of animals is carried out in the district.

Meat in butchers shops and fish in fishmongers have been inspected and the following certified as unfit for human consumption.

Beef	44 $\frac{1}{4}$ lbs.
Fried Haddock	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ stone
Finnon Haddock	2 stone
Mackerel	2 stone

The causes of condemnation were Bone Taint and Decomposition.

Other Foods.

Meat and other food shops were visited and the following foods were found to be unfit for human consumption on examination and were destroyed.

Bacon	19 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Margarine	2 lbs.
Butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ lb.
Cooking Fats	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.
Ice Cream	10 galls.
Cherry Cakes	6 lbs.
Ginger Cakes	4 lbs.
Flour	12 lbs.
Biscuits	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ozs.
Crispbread	14 packets.

Tinned and Packetted Foods

Corned Beef (6 lb.tins)	29
do do (1 lb.tins)	17
Corned Mutton(6 lb.tins)	1
M & V Ration	1
Sausages	2
Minced Beef	3
Luncheon Meat	2
Mincemeat	2
Pork	2
Whalemeat	1

Tinned and Packetted Foods (cont'd)

Galantine	1
Salmon	4
Hake	4
Mussels	9
Crab Paste	12
Pudding Mixture	2
Shredded Wheat	2
Wheat Flakes	24
Cheese	1½ lbs.
Processed Cheese	14 lbs.
Dutch Cheese	1 lb.
Camembert Cheese	60 packets.
Evaporated Milk	81
Condensed Milk	9
Beans	12
Peas	53
Plums	3
Jam	9
Damsons	1
Apples	1
Pineapple	1
Marmalade	13
Dates	8
Fruit Salad	1
Grapefruit	34
Fruit Juices	83
Soups	7
Beetroot	1
Walnuts	1
Carrots	104
Mixed Vegetables	5
Pickles	20,928

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTOR'S AND SURVEYOR'S REPORT

New Streets and Buildings

Total Number of Plans approved	47
Plans approved for New Houses	12
Plans approved for Other Buildings	28
Plans approved for conversions to dwellings	7
New Houses completed:-	
By Local Authority under Housing Acts	34
By Private Enterprise	3
Conversions and Adaptations - family units	8

New Streets and Buildings (cont'd)

Other Buildings completed	34	
Drains laid to above	1036	yards
Gullies laid to above	119	
Connections to sewer	9	
Vent shafts fixed	29	
Inspection chambers built	75	
Water Closets fixed	88	
Cesspools	3	
Intercepting Traps fixed	8	
Baths fixed	47	
Lavatory basins fixed	48	
Sinks fixed	45	
Dust Bins provided	46	

Housing Acts and Public Health Acts.

Houses in Clearance Areas to be demolished	6	
Houses under Demolition Orders to be demolished	0	
Houses demolished	1	
Statutory Notices served	0	
Informal Notices served	57	
Notices complied with	58	
Legal Proceedings taken	0	
House roofs renewed or repaired	46	
House windows repaired	37	
Houses provided with improved light	4	
Houses provided with improved ventilation	4	
House chimneys repaired	18	
House floors renewed or repaired	22	
House ceilings renewed or repaired	36	
House walls (external) repaired or plastered	14	
House eaves gutters renewed or repaired	32	
Internal wall plaster repaired	16	
House drains relaid or repaired	12	
New drains laid	72	yards
Gullies fixed	7	
Intercepting Traps fixed	2	
New sinks fixed	15	
Sinks renewed and repaired	4	
Sink waste pipes renewed and repaired	10	
W.C. roofs repaired	5	
W.C. pans renewed or repaired	16	
W.C. cisterns renewed or repaired	39	
New baths fixed	3	
Inspection Chambers built	6	
Inspection Chambers repaired	2	

Housing Acts and Public Health Acts (cont'd)

New Vent Shafts fixed	2
New F.A.I. fixed	4
Water service pipes repaired	12
Dampness remedied	10
Yards paved or repaired	2
New larders provided	1
Cooking ranges renewed or repaired	12
Hot Water systems renewed or repaired	8
Staircases repaired	1
External doors repaired	10
Dangerous walls rebuilt	1
Blocked drains cleared and cleansed	27
Accumulations of rubbish removed	16
Houses disinfected	9
Bakehouse inspections	10
Bakehouse floors cleansed	2
Bakehouse walls cleansed	3
Bakehouse ceilings repaired and cleansed	4
Cowsheds and dairies inspected	21
Dairies cleansed and limewashed	4
Factories inspected	15
New sanitary conveniences provided	1
Sanitary conveniences repaired	3

The number of inspections carried out during the year are shown in the following summary.

Defects under the Housing Acts	38
Defects under the Public Health Acts	162
Defects under the Factory Act	15
Prevention of Infectious Diseases	18
Cowsheds & Dairies Orders	21
Food Shops & Stores	54
Prevention of Nuisances	192
House Drainage	36
Supervision of Refuse Collection and Disposal	142
Supervision of Salvage	131
Rats and Mice Destruction	32

S.M. JACKSON

Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor

-----oo0oo-----

SECTION F.

Prevalence of and control over infectious and other diseases

Notifications during the year were confined to 73 cases of measles, all but two cases occurring as an epidemic in the last quarter of the year particularly affecting the 5 - 10 age group.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis

With the continued absence of diphtheria from the area it is to be hoped that there will be no falling off in the acceptance by parents of immunisation, which continues freely obtainable both from the County welfare and school health services and from general medical practitioners. Figures for children in each district immunised during the year are not immediately available but there has been no slackening off either in the publicity given such measure or in the degree of its acceptance by parents.

Tuberculosis

New cases notified during the year comprise 1 respiratory case (in the 25-35 age group) and 1 non-respiratory (in the 5-15 age group). One case was removed from the register as recovered.

One death - from tuberculosis of the respiratory system - is recorded by the Registrar General.

VICTOR R. WALKER.

District Medical Officer of Health.

June, 1949.

